



# SECOND FRONT



## Sowers Sweetens GWC

By Russ Williams

As the 1989-90 academic year rolled around, many new faces popped up on the Gardner-Webb campus. One of them is our first-ever Director of Freshman Programs, Rhoda Sowers. She hails from Staunton, Virginia, and comes to us most recently from Meredith College, where she was Director of Student Activities. Rhoda coordinates the orientation program and works to build student retention. She holds a B.S. in Recreation Administration and a M.S. in College Student Personnel.

Ms. Sowers' job begins with orientation in the fall, planning and making sure that students "have a good experience from the day they get on campus until the day they graduate." It is her goal to see students who come in as freshmen graduate in four years from GWC. Research indicates that if a student returns to the same institution after their freshman year, they are more likely to return for their third and fourth year. Therefore, the freshman experience is crucial.

Getting active in the school is a key to students being

happy. "Those students who become involved when they arrive on campus are more likely to stay." Rhoda is quick to point out that there is something for everyone at Gardner-Webb. "If we know your interests, we can help get involved in something you enjoy."

The main focus of the Office of Freshman Programs, as well as the entire college, is to show that Gardner-Webb cares. Rhoda Sowers cares. She is concerned about each and every student being happy. Her challenge is "to make it such a great experience for them their first year, that they will want to return with even greater expectations for their sophomore, junior, and senior year."

Rhoda often quotes one of her favorite mottos: "There are three kinds of people: Those who **make** things happen; those who **watch** things happen; and those who **wonder** what happened."

Rhoda Sowers describes herself as "one who **makes** things happen and is always striving to make things better." Yes, Rhoda Sowers is here now. Things are definitely happening and getting better all the time.

## An Immersion in Quebec

By Staff Writer

If you really want to get into your major, try getting immersed in it.

That's what dozens of Gardner-Webb French majors have done in the past years, and what two did this summer. Regi Deal and Kathy Henson went to the University of Quebec at Trois-Rivieres (Three Rivers), Canada for six weeks of immersion.

Immersion into a foreign language is like being baptised in that language. While there, Regi and Kathy were required to speak French all the time. If they had been caught speaking English three times, they would have been sent home -- and Dr. Andrews wouldn't have liked that! "Sometimes I still catch myself thinking I have to speak French, and looking over my shoulder for monitors," Kathy said.

A typical day at Trois-Rivieres started out with class from 8:30 until 11:30, with one hour workshops two days a week. Students could chose from phonetics, grammar, folk dancing, singing, and computer workshops. All the teachers and instructors spoke French. Regi said, "It was like trying to put together a 1000 piece puzzle. You'd pick up a few words and have to put the whole puzzle together with just those few pieces."

The students had to give a ten minute oral presentation in French. "If you're terrified to do a speech here at GWC, try doing it in another language and in front of people you hardly know!" said Regi. But, the experience gave them more confidence "in French and English," said Kathy.

Other activities included outings to Montreal and Quebec City, a boat ride down the St. Lawrence River, and a trip to a cafe for a poetry reading. Not only did the students learn French, but they got to see another part of the world. Regi said, "I had to adapt to a different culture and language. Now I'm more confident with the language and in myself!"



Rhoda Sowers and pig. Pig and Rhoda Sowers.

### "RECORD"

administration. Also, there has been a cross-section of support from everyone on campus," said Randy Kilby. He also added, "It's a milestone for myself and the staff, and it's good to see Gardner-Webb mature and come of age."

All the admissions staff are graduates of Gardner-Webb. Each one puts forth an extra effort for the benefit of the students. Ray Hardee, an admissions counselor shared some of his thoughts about the record enrollment.

"It's been very exciting to see a lot of new students come

in. The teamwork of the whole college made it possible for the success of this year."

"This may be one of the top freshmen classes at Gardner-Webb. Everyone seems to have a willingness to learn. The students are our best recruiters. If they have a name of someone they know who's interested in Gardner-Webb, mention their names to us, and we'll be glad to get some information out to them. We also serve as host for the day for any student interested in Gardner-Webb, for special events or sports held on campus," said Randy Kilby.

